

has been said to be the hardest word to say—NO, something like \$800 worth of contracts that were on the desk waiting to be OKed, and cut off a thousand dollars of almost certain prospective income. That is about what it cost us to say that little NO, and to adhere to a principle *which our Society and our Association have declared is a right principle*. The issue is plain and clear and cannot be avoided. We may just as well make the decision now as to put it off; the Publication Committee certainly will not bury its head in the sand and refuse to see what confronts it. Right is right and wrong is wrong, and a few dirty dollars do not make a wrong come any nearer being a right—though they are commonly accepted as a good excuse. What position will you, as a member of a society that has formulated and promulgated this document, embodying those principles which are declared to be right, just, decent and ethical, take in this matter? Don't shirk the issue; don't try to put it on someone else; you must face it sooner or later, so we put it to you now. Will you stand for the right and a possible deficit which you will have to provide means for meeting—for it costs money to publish the sort of JOURNAL you are getting—or will you choose to take the dollars and ignore the principle you have subscribed to—to be bought outright—to be subsidized—to depart from that which you have, in theory, declared to be right?

Some advertisements, almost universally regarded as "good business," came into the office and, pending a final decision of the question, were accepted and published. They were not approved by the Publication Committee, for there was no opportunity of getting a definite decision on so momentous a question without careful study. But that is in the past. Now what can we do in the future? Must this action deprive the JOURNAL of the possibility of eventually getting upon a self-supporting basis? Some of us have given a good deal of careful thought to the matter, and we believe that such is not the case. We have enough faith in those manufacturers who are doing a perfectly straight business to believe that they will come to see this as we see it, and to realize the advantage to themselves of being in such good clean company. It remains for time and hard work to demonstrate whether this conclusion is justified. Certainly it will take longer to reach the goal, but we firmly believe it will be reached, and that you will find in the end that honesty of purpose in this matter will pay, as truly as every good business man has found that honesty in business pays.

What, exactly, is a "secret medicine"? That is the crux of the whole matter. There are, or may be, several definitions of the term. The actual definition has been formulated by a national pharmaceutical organization of a foreign country, and has been accepted and adopted by the American Pharmaceutical Association, and by it recommended to the A. M. A. According to this definition, a medicine is secret if everything about it—ingredients, working formula, method of preparation and all processes—are not known and published. In theory this is entirely correct. But practical conditions are such as to make it impossible to enforce such a definition. Large amounts of capital have been invested in honest pharmaceutical manufacturing business, and this capital should be protected from dishonest competition. Consequently, until there may be devised some way for securing protection not only to this capital, but also the public and to the patient, it would not be right to insist upon the disclosure of these working methods. We can, however, insist that the manufacturer give a truthful statement of the actual amount of the active ingredients in the finished product of that which he wishes to advertise. This is the working definition which we have placed upon the term "secret medicine." If at any time an advertisement appears in the JOURNAL in which the advertiser publishes a formula that can be shown to be untruthful, such advertisement will be dropped upon the demonstration of that fact. In this whole contention we do not intend to criticise other journals. They may not appreciate the facts of the case, or they may be under the control of men who do not care for anything but money. It is not our place to judge. But we have decided to do the right as we see it, and we hope you will all approve.

Some replies from advertisers have been received since the Publication Committee took the action which we have just discussed. One firm writes: "In sending you copy for advertisement . . . we wish to compliment you, and will say we cheerfully go into the JOURNAL to encourage the worthy work undertaken." "It is to be regretted that so few medical journals are on such a plane." Another, in sending in the formula to accompany the advertisement, writes: "In this connection we beg to state that if the rule made by the Society in regard to advertising be strictly carried out, the same will make the advertising space taken by our company of decidedly more value to us." So you see, perhaps the action of the Committee, in supporting the editor's policy, may not lead to utter ruin, after all! It may, in the end, pay to be decent as well as it pays to be honest.